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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0488
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 000157

SIPDIS

STATE FOR OES/ETC--KANE, EAP/MLS
BANGKOK FOR REO--HHOWARD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [TSPL](#) [TBIO](#) [EAGR](#) [ENRG](#) [ECON](#) [AMGT](#) [APER](#) [EPA](#) [CB](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY SCIENCE FELLOWS PROGRAM 2009 - CAMBODIA

REF: STATE 10843

1. In response to Reftel, Embassy Phnom Penh would like to submit a request for an Embassy Science Fellow to help the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) develop standard practices for evaluating environmental impact assessments (EIAs) for large-scale infrastructure projects. The Fellow would work with the Ministry of Environment's (MOE's) EIA Department, and possibly with environmental NGOs in Phnom Penh. The program timeframe is flexible, but a two-month fellowship during Winter 2010 would be preferable. Potential Fellows should have experience in drafting and/or evaluating EIAs for large-scale infrastructure and investment projects such as dams, bridges, urban development initiatives, or plantation agriculture ventures. Experience evaluating projects in tropical climates would be helpful but is not necessary.

2. PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION: Cambodia is rapidly developing, and land in various parts of the country is under development by both the RGC and private investors for an array of initiatives, ranging from rubber plantations to hydropower dams and shopping malls. With this growing level of development activity comes a growing threat to Cambodia's natural resources from land-clearing, pollution, and unsustainable business practices. According to Cambodian land and environmental laws, public and private entities conducting large-scale development projects are required to draft and submit EIAs for the Ministry of Environment's approval. However, the EIA Department at the Ministry of Environment is unequipped to manage and effectively evaluate the flood of EIAs that are regularly submitted for review. Based on requests from RGC officials, including one of Cambodia's Deputy Prime Ministers, a Science Fellow could make a valuable contribution to the Ministry of Environment by:

- Helping the EIA Department develop a standard template for EIAs.
- Training the department staff on basic EIA evaluation topics, such as: 1) what questions to ask; 2) what answers to accept; and 3) how to make recommendations.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT: Post will provide housing in central Phnom Penh, likely a serviced apartment or hotel room, office space at the embassy, and in-country travel and logistical support as needed.

4. RSO CONCURRENCE: The RSO has cleared this proposal.

5. CONTACT INFORMATION: Post contact for this proposal is Political/Economic Assistant Juhani Platt, plattjm@state.gov, 855-23-728-404.

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